

**Town of Mansfield Parking Steering Committee for Storrs Center
Tuesday, October 12, 2010
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
1244 Storrs Road (behind People's United Bank in Storrs Commons)**

6:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present: Karla Fox (Chair), Martha Funderburk, Matthew Hart, Meredith Lindsey, Ralph Pemberton, Mindy Perkins (on behalf of Paul Aho), Michael Taylor

Ex-Officio Members Present: Lon Hultgren, Carrie Krasnow, Macon Toledano and Howard Kaufman, Cynthia van Zelm

1. Call to Order

Chair Karla Fox called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

2. Approval of Minutes of June 22, 2010

Mike Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of June 22, 2010. Ralph Pemberton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Remarks from the Chair

Karla Fox referred to the October 12 memo from Cynthia van Zelm and Carrie Krasnow which outlined issues related to Storrs Center parking. Ms. Fox said the memo follows the order of the agenda.

4. Committee Discussion of Issues for Storrs Center Parking (Parking Financial Structure, Management and Operations, Enforcement, Storrs Center Surrounding Parking)

Ms. Fox outlined the four main issues of Parking Financial Structure, Management and Operations, Enforcement and Storrs Center Surrounding Parking.

Ms. Fox asked what the Committee's role is with respect to surface parking since it will be a privately owned lot. Matt Hart said while it will be private, the goal is to integrate it into the entire parking system so it is managed as one system.

Howard Kaufman said that some financial decisions on parking will be business decisions by the development team.

Ms. Fox said her feeling is the largest concern from townspeople is that the parking break even and not lose money. It will be important to understand all the costs and revenues.

Mr. Kaufman agreed that parking needs to break even. One of the developer's concerns is that they meet the parking needs of the residential and commercial tenants.

Matt Hart noted that the Town and LeylandAlliance are contemplating Leyland managing the Storrs Center parking operations for an initial period of years. Leyland would probably subcontract with a third-party operator (professional parking operator) which the Town would need to approve. The residential developer, EDR, would lease some of the parking spaces for a number of years for its tenants. Mr. Hart said a management agreement would need to be developed by the Town and Leyland.

Mr. Kaufman said the concern was whether there would be any negative drain on the Town. If Leyland manages the parking, it takes the risk off the Town.

Mr. Hart said he is proceeding with discussions with Leyland under the following principle – that parking operations break even. He said the Town is fortunate that there is no debt on the garage with the State's grant. As Mr. Kaufman mentioned, the proposal would be for Leyland to take on management of the parking, and, consequently, any potential risk.

Mike Taylor asked Public Works Director Lon Hultgren if he had any concerns with Leyland potentially managing the parking. Mr. Hultgren said, on behalf of the Town, he would like to review any contract with a third-party operator.

Ms. Fox referred to one of the outstanding issues as described in the memo about on-street parking. Should it be free or paid?

Ralph Pemberton expressed his concern that paid on-street parking would lead people to park in the EO Smith High School lot.

Carrie Krasnow said she recognizes the appeal of free parking, but is concerned that once those spaces fill there will be overspill to surrounding areas anyway. She noted that free parking still requires enforcement. On-street parking is often metered because it is premium parking and charging causes people to move in and out more quickly.

Mr. Taylor asked about whether all on-street parking could be very short-term (15 to 30 minutes). Ms. Krasnow said there are probably too many spaces to allow this to work effectively.

Mr. Kaufman said he recognizes the concerns about metered parking particularly from commercial tenants who may be used to providing free parking to their customers.

Mr. Taylor said currently his only recourse with respect to enforcement is to tow cars. He feels that paid on-street parking will exacerbate issues on his lot. He is less concerned about the garage and surface lot as people will use those parking options for longer stays.

Ms. Fox asked whether enforcement can be done comprehensively across public and private lots.

Mr. Hultgren noted that revenue from meters typically goes to pay for enforcement.

Ms. Fox said that the University has enforcement officers. If Storrs Center can have an enforcement district, perhaps costs could be spread across the property owners. A third-party operator could take on the enforcement of all parking. Ms. Fox said that one idea (as previously discussed) was that private property owners would pay into the enforcement.

Mr. Taylor said that his goals would be that parking would be free on-street, it would be limited to 1 hour, enforcement would cover all lots, and his employees would supplement the enforcement.

Ms. Krasnow said that a Pay on Foot system in the garage and surface lots would eliminate a lot of enforcement costs. This would free up people to do more enforcement on the street.

Ms. Krasnow said she would be concerned about the revenue that would be sacrificed with no meters on approximately 100 on-street spaces.

Mr. Taylor expressed concerns about the additional enforcement costs for the private property owners. Mr. Hultgren said if a district could be formed, with enforcement, the private property owners should get some relief.

Macon Toledano asked about what type of enforcement could be done on a private lot? Ticketing? Chalking tires?

Cynthia van Zelm said that she, Mr. Hart, and Mr. Hultgren will follow-up on what type of enforcement might be possible by a third party and/or municipality on a private lot.

Ms. Krasnow said there are various enforcement options in addition to meters: chalking tires, mounted cameras to record the license of a car and sensors in the pavement that can both monitor how long a car has been parked. There is a higher labor cost with chalking tires vs. meters. Mr. Taylor asked for confirmation on whether ticket revenue can go into enforcement and Ms. Krasnow replied in the affirmative. Ms. Krasnow said that sometimes enforcement can get lax around ticketing because ticketing is so frowned upon by the public.

Mr. Hart asked Ms. Krasnow to provide information on how much estimated revenue would be generated by on-street meters in Storrs Center. Ms. Krasnow will put together an estimate.

Mr. Pemberton asked how enforcement would work at night in the EO Smith lot since enforcement of lots does not typically go into the night. He said that at night, with events at the school, parking can overflow into Mr. Taylors' lot.

Ms. Fox summarized the discussions from the meeting:

A likely outcome is that LeylandAlliance will take on the responsibility/risk for management of the parking system.

The two main issues appear to be whether on-street parking should be free or paid, how should it be enforced; and how enforcement in surrounding lots to Storrs Center may be structured so enforcement is not untenable for property owners.

5. Review of next meeting date

The Committee tentatively set a next meeting date of November 9 at 6 pm. Ms. van Zelm will follow-up with Chair Fox on next steps and meeting dates.

Ms. Fox said she wanted to ensure that all Committee members could make a next meeting to come to some conclusion on recommendations to the Town Council.

6. Public Comment

Steve Squires noted that he did not think the public would be upset if they were ticketed if they went over the allotted time period for parking (in a free on-street parking situation).

David Freudmann said that enforcement is a labor cost. He noted that Willimantic took out meters and the city does a good job of providing free parking. He does not feel that the Storrs Center area has a captive audience for parking as the University does.

Mr. Freudmann noted that some good progress has been made with the proposal of Leyland taking on the management of the parking.

Ms. Fox noted that all the Committee members had received Mr. Freudmann's letter.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.